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GEOGRAPHY AND TRAVELS.¹

AFRICAN EXPLORATION.—The April number of the Royal Geographical Society's *Proceedings* notices an interesting report received by the London Missionary Society from their mission at Mtowa, on the western shore of Lake Tanganyika, in Northern Uguha, concerning the country and its people. Uguha is divided by the Lukuga river into two districts, northern and southern. Northern Uguha has a population of probably from 15,000 to 20,000, and the largest village is Ruanda, with from 500 to 600 houses. Mtowa, near which the missionaries have settled, is a village of the average size, containing ninety houses and some 300 inhabitants. It is enclosed by a semi-circle of hills, which start from Southern Ugoma, trend inland for some distance, and reach the lake shore at Cape Kahangwa. Beyond these hills stretches the plain of Ruanda, watered by several small streams, of which the Lugumba is the only one of importance. The domestic animals of Uguha are goats, sheep and fowls, but some of their chiefs possess pigeons obtained from Marungu or Ujiji. The only cattle are those belonging to the mission, though some are occasionally brought across the lake to be taken into the interior. There are said to be numerous wild animals in the hills to the north, among which are buffaloes, gorillas, leopards, monkeys, wild boars and antelopes, but hyenas are unknown. Good timber is not very plentiful except at some distance inland, where teak and other trees abound. Maize and millet are the only grain cultivated, though near the lake the land is in parts suitable for rice and also for the sugar-cane. Micaceous slate is found in abundance almost everywhere. The natives of Uguha are peaceable and industrious on the whole, but rather given to drink at the close of the harvest. Physically they are a fine people, men of over five feet eight inches being the rule rather than the exception. The Waguha are chiefly distinguished from their neighbors by the peculiar mode of dressing the hair and by the fact that the men chip the two front teeth and the women are profusely tattooed. There is but little, however, to distinguish them from the Warua, except a slight difference of language. Their first chief is said to have come from Ugoma and settled near Cape Kahangwa, where he was joined by people from Urua and Marungu.

As regards clothing, the women wear two or three pieces of fiber cloth dyed in two colors, while the men wear one large piece tucked under the belt, some also using the skins of monkeys and other animals, as well as foreign cloth.

Kasanga, of Ruanda, is said to be chief of all Uguha, but he in his turn is subject to some one else. In the villages regard is had to precedence in the arrangement of the houses, the *Walingwena*, or slaves, living in one part and the *Wabangi*, or freemen, in another.

¹ Edited by ELLIS H. YARNALL, Philadelphia.

The latter have elders, or *Watwita*, who represent them in the council of the elders.

On the outside the houses appear like beehives, but the inside walls are perpendicular and some four feet high. From these walls springs the roof, the center of which is ten or twelve feet from the ground, but there is no center post, and the rafters are simply fastened by rings of cane from the center downwards. On the outside, grass is laid very thickly and made to reach the ground. The interior is kept scrupulously clean by the women, and order appears to prevail in the arrangement of everything.

The trade of the country consists chiefly of ivory from Urua, Ubudjwe and other districts and in home-grown corn. Of late years the men have shown a disposition to travel, visiting Unanyembe and even Bagamoyo and Zanzibar. Some go as porters in Arab caravans and others on ventures of their own.

Further interesting details are given concerning the domestic life, musical instruments, modes of burial and religious notions of the Waguha.

At the meeting of the Berlin Geographical Society, held on March 5, 1881, it was announced that several letters had been received from Dr. E. Junker, who at the commencement of last year undertook at his own expense a second voyage to Africa, for the purpose of exploring those portions of Central Africa first made known to us by the travels of Dr. Schweinfurth. The most recent of these letters was dated from the Monbuttu country, September 1, 1880. After a lengthened sojourn at Meschera-el-Rek, on the banks of the Bahr-el-Gazal, Dr. Junker had penetrated in a south-west direction through the land of the Bougo or Dohr negroes into the territory of the Niam Niam, by the inhabitants of which, falsely described as anthropophagi, he was received in a most hospitable manner. In the settlement of the chief, Ndoruma, he built himself a hut supplied with every comfort, and here, in the enjoyment of perfect repose, he worked out the reports of his journey, which have already reached home. Thence, in the month of August, he proceeded in a south-west direction into the territory of Pulembata, and afterwards in a south-south-east direction into the country of the Monbuttu. His letter of the first of September, above mentioned, was dated from the limits of the territory of the Mangballa, a day's journey north of the Welle. The traveler proposes to cross the Welle and to visit the Mom-banga, a tribe of Monbuttu, and finally to penetrate in a north-west direction amongst the A-Madi. All these territories are as yet unexplored, as they are situated to the westward of Dr. Schweinfurth's track, and there was reason to hope that the traveler, whose state of health was perfect, would successfully carry out his intentions.

On April 1st the French Geographical Society gave a reception to Dr. Lenz, on his return from Timbuktu. The successful traveler gave some interesting details on the present condition of Timbuktu. Its houses are built of brick, and the population is now only 20,000. It has greatly decayed, and the inhabited part of the town is surrounded by great spaces covered with ruins. There are numerous schools and rich libraries. Dr. Lenz had a cordial reception, and every night during his twenty days' stay he was present at religious conferences which the learned men of the city held with his interpreter. The commentaries on the Koran formed the only subject of conversation. Timbuktu is united with the Niger three miles off by a series of lakes formerly canals. Dr. Lenz has also made some interesting observations on the Sahara, tending to confirm the conclusions of Rohlfs and other recent scientific travelers, as to the variety which is to be met with in the great desert. It is really a plateau about 300 meters in altitude, no part of it being below the level of the sea. Granite hills, sandy plains, shallow lakes, fertile oases alternate over nearly the whole surface, while beasts of prey are rarely to be met with. Dr. Lenz does not advocate the construction of a railroad from the Niger to Algeria.

No fewer than seven different languages are spoken on one side of Lake Nyassa, which is only 350 miles in length, and natives from the southern end cannot understand those at the northern.

The Algerian missionary expedition has established a station in Urundi at the head of Lake Tanganyika. It is a country whose physical features are strongly marked, a chain of treeless mountains traversing it from north to south. The population is numerous, but very timid. They appear to be agricultural in their habits, manioc, bananas, beans, etc., being largely cultivated.

Although there are some marshes, Urundi is reported to be healthier than Ujiji, an additional recommendation being the entire absence of Arabs. The Wabikari, who live near where the missionaries are settled, have shown themselves well disposed, though they have the reputation of being thieves and enemies to all strangers. They were anxious for the party to settle among them on their arrival, but, the Bikari district lying low, it was thought wiser to occupy the right bank of the Murembué, which appeared a healthier site.

After the completion of seventy or eighty miles, the road from Dar-es-Salaam to Lake Nyassa has been temporarily discontinued. Its superintendent is now employed by the Sultan of Zanzibar exploring the neighboring region. This road has already had an excellent, even marvelous, effect upon the

natives. Dr. Kirk, of Zanzibar, has recently passed over it for some forty miles in company with a naval officer. He reports that it is now quite safe for unarmed travelers, although but two or three years ago no one would have ventured in the neighborhood without a large escort.

The *Academy* states that "one of the objects of Mr. Jas. Stewart's late visit to the head of Lake Nyassa was to ascertain how far the Kambwe lagoon could be made available as a harbor for the missionary steamer from Livingstonia. During his investigations he made a curious discovery with regard to the River Rukuru, which until about two years ago flowed through the lagoon. He found that this river had changed its course, and that its former bed had silted up and is now even higher than the surrounding ground. This unusual occurrence he accounts for in the following way: During the rainy season the country is under water for miles, so the Rukuru flowed in a course marked by reeds and had for its banks the standing water of its own overflow. The heavy sand was rolled down the channel from the higher ground and deposited over its whole length until it was raised to such a height that the current was forced into another channel. In further explanation it should be mentioned that the Rukuru, in the last fifteen miles of its course, winds through precipitous valleys and falls upwards of 2000 feet, washing far into the lake large quantities of blueish-gray silt."

A road between Lake Nyassa and Tanganyika is projected.

The *Athenæum* states that "two important maps bearing upon the geography of Africa have been published in the *Mittheilungen*. The first exhibits the preliminary results of Herr Clemens Denhardt's explorations of the Tana River, which that explorer ascended and carefully surveyed almost to the foot of the eastern buttresses of snow-clad Kenia. Herr Denhardt found the river to be navigable throughout, and as its banks are inhabited by peaceable Wapokomo and Galla, he considers it to present many advantages for penetrating to Mount Kenia or to Lake Zamburu, in the Galla country to the north. We, therefore, direct the attention of intending explorers to this locality, for hardly anywhere else in Africa can substantial discoveries of equal interest be accomplished within so short a distance from the coast. The second map, almost equally important, exhibits Dr. Junker's journey up the Khor Baraka, from its mouth to the south of Suakin, as far as Belagenda. Herr Hasentine, the compiler of this map, has embodied in it all the information available with respect to the country it embraces."

GEOGRAPHICAL NEWS.—Two English engineers, Lieutenants Conder and Mantell, are about to commence the survey of Eastern Palestine. It is estimated that the work will take five years to accomplish.—Mr. Leigh Smith expects to pay another visit to Franz-Josef Land this summer.—In an appendix to Captain

Markham's "Polar Reconnaissance," Sir Joseph Hooker, in treating of the botanical specimens collected in this voyage to Novaya Zemlya observes: "Comparing, then, the floras of the three high Arctic meridians of Novaya Zemlya, lat. 70° - 77° , long. E. 60° ; Spitzbergen, lat. $76\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ - $80\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, long. E. 20° ; West Greenland and Smith's Sound, &c., lat. 71° - 82° , long. W. 60° - 70° , we find that they present great differences, Greenland being the most remarkable: 1. From the number of species of European types it contains which there reach so very high a parallel. 2. From differing more in its flora from Spitzbergen and Novaya Zemlya than these do from one another; and, 3, From the absence of Arctic *Leguminosæ*, *Caltha* and various other plants that extend elsewhere around the Arctic circle. These facts favor the conclusion which I have expressed in the Appendix to Sir George Nares's Narrative (11, 307), that the distribution of plants in the Arctic regions has been meridional, and that their subsequent spread eastward and westward has not been sufficient to obliterate the evidence of this prior direction of migration. To this conclusion I would now add that whereas there is no difficulty in assuming that Novaya Zemlya and the American Polar Islands have been peopled with plants by migration from the south, no such assumption will explain the European character of the Greenland, and especially the high Northern Greenland vegetation, the main features of which favor the supposition that it retains many plants which arrived from Europe by a route that crossed the Polar area itself when that area was under geographical and climatal conditions which no longer obtain."—In a lecture delivered recently before the Society of Arts, in London, by Mr. Edward Whymper on Chimborazo and Cotopaxi, he dwelt at some length on the sickness experienced when at great elevations, the result of the diminution in the atmospheric pressure. He found the distress mitigated by doses of ten grains of chlorate of potash every two or three hours. After suffering for several days on Chimborazo, during which he persevered and ascended to a height of 17,400 feet, his condition improved, and finally he was restored to his normal state, so that after a residence of seventeen days on the mountain, passing the nights at heights varying from 14,400 to 17,300, all trace of mountain sickness had disappeared.—Lieutenant Karl Weyprecht, the discoverer, with Lieutenant Payer, of Franz-Josef Land, died on March 29th, at the age of forty-three.—The Bremen Geographical Society propose to send an exploring expedition to the Tchuktche Peninsula, Northern Siberia.—At a recent meeting of the Paris Geographical Society, M. Dutreuil de Rhins identified Nabchu, where Colonel Prejevalsky was obliged to stop when only about 180 miles from the capital of Tibet, with Abbé Huc's Na-ptchu, about 32° $10'$ N. lat., 89° $30'$ long. E. from Paris.—The winter of 1880-81, so remarkable for its severity in America and Europe, was one of unusual mildness in Siberia.